

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Optical equalization across N (an integer, $N > 1$) channels of a multi-channel link of a communications network, is accomplished by averaging effects of optical performance variations within each of the M (an integer, $M > 1$) parallel data signals. At a transmitting end node of the link, each one of the M data signals are distributed across the N channels of the link. Thus a substantially equal portion of each data signal is conveyed through the link in each one of the N channels. At a receiving end node of the link, respective bit-streams received over the N channels to are processed recover the M data signals. As a result, bit error rates of the bit-streams received through each channel are averaged across the M data signals, all of which therefore have a substantially equal aggregate bit error rate.

00827" 6622460